

SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON SOLID WASTE ACTIVITIES

March 28, 2005

5:15 PM

Chairman Roy called the meeting to order.

The Clerk called the roll.

Present: Aldermen Roy, Guinta, Forest, O'Neil

Absent: Alderman Thibault

Messrs.: Joanne McLaughlin, Frank Thomas

Chairman Roy called for the Pledge of Allegiance, this function being led by Alderman Forest.

Chairman Roy stated I would like to introduce Frank Thomas and Joanne McLaughlin who will be pretty much leading the Solid Waste Committee through the throws of waste and disposal.

Chairman Roy addressed item 3 of the agenda:

3. Report on Calendar Year 2004:
 - a) municipal solid waste, recycling, yard waste and Drop-off facility.

Mr. Frank Thomas, Public Works Director, stated we will give you a report on what happened during 2004 regarding solid waste and yard waste recycling, Joanne.

Ms. Joanne McLaughlin, Recycling Coordinator, stated you'll notice that the first two attachments that have been included in your package include (1) the curbside collection history...I've included numbers that go back to 1997. We have totals for municipal solid waste, that's trash...for paper and cardboard, for commingled containers and yard waste and trees. The thing that seems to be constant in these numbers is that the solid waste numbers continue to rise anywhere to four to five percent per year. Fibers in commingled containers seem to maintain a constant number and yard waste and trees really does fluctuate. The other table that I've

included for your use is a summary of our Drop-Off Facility operations; that is all of the business that is done there over the course of our workday...it includes recycling of containers, newspapers and cardboard, we also collect tires, metals and appliances, oil, auto batteries, CRT's which is the computer monitors and television sets which we have a special collection program for, we also do our own freon gas extractions from our light goods and we collect propane tanks and the yard waste number is just for the yard waste that's come through our scale house.

Mr. Thomas stated as Joanne mentioned our solid waste tonnage has gone up every year. It's gone up 30% since 1997 so that's a significant increase in solid waste and we are maintaining basically the same resources as far as hours and equipment.

Chairman Roy in reference to the commingled containers stated that's all the weekly pickup of recyclables.

Mr. Thomas stated that's the bi-weekly.

Chairman Roy stated looking at those numbers they've been in decline since 1997. Any forecast for the future, is that a trend we can reverse?

Mr. Thomas replied again I think we spent a lot of time studying that issue and if you remember our solid waste report that we provided the Committee recommends that the Committee and the City look at some changes. I firmly believe that going to the weekly collection I think that will boost participation and the amount of material generated. We're also looking at potentially going to what we call "single-stream" where all the recyclables are in one container. Again, that makes it easier for the residents of Manchester and I think it would make it easier and more convenient for the citizens.

Ms. McLaughlin stated I would just add to that that Goffstown recently went to a single-stream program and they saw their...in the first week of the program they saw the diversion rate increase from 17 to 25% resulting in a first-year savings of \$30,000. The take home message in Goffstown was the more you recycle, the lower the impact on your property taxes and I'm sure we could echo that same thing.

Chairman Roy stated that leads up to my follow-up question. Roughly, the 300 tons that we've decreased since 1997 if you had to put a dollar amount on that what would we be looking at that it's costing the taxpayers.

Mr. Thomas replied well 300 tons at about \$60/ton that what it would cost us for transfer and disposal and you'd have to add onto that the actual cost of collection which is another \$5/ton. So, there is a cost connected by not recycling.

On motion of Alderman Forest, duly seconded by Alderman Guinta, it was voted to receive and file the report on calendar year 2004.

Chairman Roy addressed item4 of the agenda:

4. EIQ's for Recycling and Yard Waste Services:

Ms. McLaughlin stated EIQ's are "Expressions of Interest & Qualifications" that we've requested from recycling and yard waste vendors. We had requests for six packages and we received qualifications and ideas from five companies. We're currently doing the technical review and the Finance Department is doing the financial review on the material that was submitted.

Mr. Thomas stated if these firms that Joanne mentioned are qualified we will ask them to submit proposals to provide both recycling and yard waste services. Requests for Proposals (RFP's) will define a minimum level of services similar to what we're experiencing now and will allow them to submit alternatives both along the lines of what we would be requesting and what they are suggesting. So, we're kind of leaving the Requests for Proposals open...if somebody has a good idea to save money about recycling at a cost that's beneficial we'll entertain a motion.

Alderman Forest stated the RFP's are almost ready to go out, right.

Mr. Thomas stated they are pretty much ready to go out. It's a two-step process. The first step is as we mentioned the Expressions of Interest & Qualifications... what we want to do is to pre-qualify the vendors that are going to provide the services. Once we have done that we may short list the people that have submitted proposals and then they will get the Request for Proposals.

Ms. McLaughlin stated that RFP will be issued on April 20th.

On motion of Alderman Guinta, duly seconded by Alderman Roy, it was voted to receive and file the EIQ's for recycling and yard waste services.

Chairman Roy addressed item 5 of the agenda:

5. Discussion on RFP for marketing, recycling and yard waste services.

Chairman Roy stated Frank I believe there's a line item for recycling advertisements and constituent updates could you give us an update on that and where you'd like to see that in the future.

Mr. Thomas stated quite frankly that line item has come down a little bit in the proposed budget that's coming up, however, that doesn't mean that we'd potentially be impacted. As we go through the proposal process what we could do is require some of the vendors to take a more active role in the promotion especially of recycling, so what we will be trying to shift some of that promotional money onto the vendors. We ultimately pay anyway but it's a way and that would be something that Joanne monitors closely. Again, I think marketing is a key to a successful recycling program so it's going to be an area to monitor.

Chairman Roy addressed item 6 of the agenda:

6. MSW disposal contract renewal in June 2006.

Chairman Roy asked is the Solid Waste Renewal Contract coming up in June of 2006 tied to the EIQ?

Ms. McLaughlin no that is independent of the EIQ, that is for recycling and yard waste services. This will be the first 5-year option following our 10-year initial contract. We have four 5-year options available; this will be the first one which is due for renewal in June of 2006, so this is an informational preview.

Mr. Thomas stated if you remember correctly a solid waste report did come into the committee recommending that we not through a bid or performance process for transfer and disposal because our long-term ability that we presently have the favorable price to secure it safely. So, we aren't going through the proposal process for that. We are going to roll that contract.

Chairman Roy addressed item 7 of the agenda:

7. Budget impact for FY2006.

Chairman Roy stated this meeting was originally scheduled for Wednesday when we'd be hearing the Mayor's budget presentation, so I would like to table item 7 until our next meeting or another time that we can meet with Frank and Joanne.

On motion of Alderman Forest, duly seconded by Alderman Guinta, it was voted to table item 7.

Chairman Roy stated we'll get that update from you after we have actually had the opportunity to see the budget, Frank.

Chairman Roy addressed item 8 of the agenda:

8. Outstanding Issues:

- a) toters for small commercial properties and non-profits (larger commercial and non-profits, etc. require private dumpster service);
- b) restrictions on bulky waste collections (currently limited);
- c) augment Saturday drop-off hours;
- d) residential properties over six (6) units (Assessor's office classifies one and two-unit buildings as residential, and anything over three units as commercial).

Chairman Roy stated looking at item 8 which is a lot of the held over action items...Frank if you could touch upon those and how we can help you accommodate the constituents.

Mr. Thomas stated there are four different items identified there. Two of the items I would like to be able to do a little more work coming back with a little bit more detailed proposals and that would be for (b & d)...(b) is restricting bulky waste collections and the other (d) is referring to limiting collection of refuse from some of the larger establishments in the City and I think that those areas need a little bit more discussion before we come back and make a firm proposal. However, there are a couple that we would like to have moving forward with...the first one (a) toters for small commercial properties and non-profits...if you remember correctly from the report one of the recommendations was to allow the small commercial properties two toters and the same with non-profits and have the same opportunities that single-family residents have for those establishments and so we

would like consideration from the Committee to potentially move forward with this. We do have another subject that is not on here that we could come back to the Committee at the next meeting...remember there was a discussion. However, making toters available to small commercial and non-profits I think that reasonable and we'd ask for your consideration.

Alderman Guinta stated when you say "make available" do you mean require or is it optional.

Mr. Thomas stated as an option. Right now, we do collect trash from these small commercials and non-profits but the policy that we have in place is the toters that we provide are only provided to residential places and so we've gotten a lot of complaints from small commercials and so in the Master Plan that we put together it's felt that we should offer the toters to the smaller commercial businesses.

Alderman Guinta stated I just want to make sure I follow this. You provide the toters now to residents but when you say provide you mean they have to pay for them.

Mr. Thomas stated they have to purchase them.

Alderman Guinta stated we are talking about the same geographic area but including all businesses and non-profits. So, if they want a pick up they would have to buy a toter at their expense. How much are the toters...\$35 or \$40?

Mr. Thomas replied they're \$45.

Alderman Guinta stated I assume there's a maximum amount of toters that they can utilize.

Mr. Thomas stated under this program they would only be allowed two.

Alderman Guinta asked what's the cost...I know what the cost is to the non-profits but for small commercial properties...what you're saying is that they're looking for this; that they would like this additional service.

Mr. Thomas stated they're getting the service now. This is not to provide toters to somebody that may never use them, but quite frankly a lot of small mom and pop stores now put the trash out once-a-week at the side of the curb and our regular people pick it up.

Alderman Guinta asked why couldn't they just do that now.

Mr. Thomas answered because the policy that was established...

Alderman Guinta interjected it excludes them or does not include them.

Mr. Thomas responded correct.

Alderman Forest stated so it excludes commercial business.

Alderman Guinta stated it sounds like you're picking up the garbage anyway. If they moved to toters on their own it's probably going to get picked up anyway so is this more of a technical change than anything else?

Mr. Thomas stated it's an equity type thing. They're paying taxes, they put the trash out and we pick up the trash.

Alderman Guinta asked so really we are talking about the container in which they put trash.

Mr. Thomas answered yes. We are collecting from them now.

Alderman Guinta asked so instead of going to Home Depot and buying a plastic trash can or a larger type of...all this does is essentially allow them to use a toter.

Mr. Thomas answered that is correct and that is actually a benefit to us.

Alderman Guinta asked so that should be a savings to you and we are not requiring them to do this.

Mr. Thomas answered that is correct.

Alderman Guinta asked how come we didn't include them in the first revision of the policy.

Mr. Thomas stated because originally...commercial collection is very difficult in this City. Some establishments generate a large amount of trash and we only go by once a week.

Alderman Guinta stated and they have to contract out.

Mr. Thomas responded that is correct.

Alderman Guinta stated so this is where the problem has always been. I get a lot of requests from downtown businesses and you and I have talked about this, there are downtown companies that probably require more than weekly pick-up but not probably daily and they are not quite a small business but they are not a huge corporation so they are in that middle ground and I have been asked repeatedly in the downtown zone...I mean I am really not expanding the zone significantly. That is a request that I get quite often.

Mr. Thomas responded again I think that is an area that we are going to have to continue to look at especially in the downtown service area where they are paying. Again, what we are talking about is not an expanded service. It is just allowing them to utilize the toters.

Ms. McLaughlin stated part of the problem as we see it also is that we do have a lot of mom and pop shops and what they put out besides the trash is a whole heck of a lot of boxes. That is all ending up in the landfill. So what we are requesting of them is to restrict them to the two containers but they need to recycle the rest of the materials and if they do that then we will continue to pick them up. If they insist on using more than two than they really require a dumpster service because it is more than we can handle.

Alderman Forest stated I know that was one of the requests that I had was to look into the mom and pop stores mainly because I have a lot of stores in my ward that don't have any room for dumpsters. They put everything out on the sidewalk now so I think this will be good for the small stores and the small businesses.

On motion of Alderman Forest, duly seconded by Alderman Guinta it was voted to allow the Highway Department to go forward with toters for small commercial properties and non-profits.

On motion of Alderman Forest, duly seconded by Alderman Guinta it was voted to table items b and d.

Chairman Roy asked Mr. Thomas to address item c) augmentation of Saturday drop-off hours.

Mr. Thomas stated it is something that we are recommending but we are into a maintenance budget this year so I am recommending that we maintain the status quo up at the drop-off area at least.

Alderman Guinta asked can we table that then. Is it fair to say that maybe we should just table any of these that have budget impacts? We need to see what the budget is. The department heads probably already know what it is.

On motion of Alderman Forest, duly seconded by Alderman Guinta, it was voted to table item c.

Chairman Roy addressed item 9 of the agenda:

9. Discussion on 100% totter phase-in.

Chairman Roy stated I wanted this item on the agenda as more of a proactive discussion and I ask Frank to talk about not only the 100% totter phase-in over the next few years but what fiscal impact or worker's compensation impact the totters may have if we had City wide usage.

Mr. Thomas stated again what we would like to do is come back to the City at the next meeting with an overall plan for totters. We feel that the totters are very, very important not only in the downtown area but throughout the City. We have found that the more totters that are out there being utilized by the public the less back injuries and worker's compensation cases we have. Quite frankly, there are less litter problems that we are seeing in the City. We strongly support the notion of using totters throughout the City and in the downtown area. There are some questions that still have to be answered internally. We would like to see everybody use totters. If it is a one-person household maybe we can use smaller totters.

Chairman Roy asked as part of the RFP is there discussion on recycling totters and implementation of those.

Ms. McLaughlin answered as Frank said we wrote the EIQ fairly openly looking for new ideas and certainly having ideas of our own on tasks we would like numbers on such as cardboard collection in the downtown and mingled containers in the downtown and single stream recycling collection. If we went to single stream that may require a totter for recycling so some of those things I feel are still up in the air until we know what it going to happen.

Mr. Thomas stated we have asked for a minimum bid on maintaining what we have but we are certainly looking to increase the service. As I mentioned earlier, if somebody comes in and proposes something that will be cost effective for the City and allows us to accomplish our goals then we will look at it.

There being no further business to come before the committee, on motion of Alderman Forest, duly seconded by Alderman Guinta, it was voted to adjourn.

A True Record. Attest.

Clerk of Committee